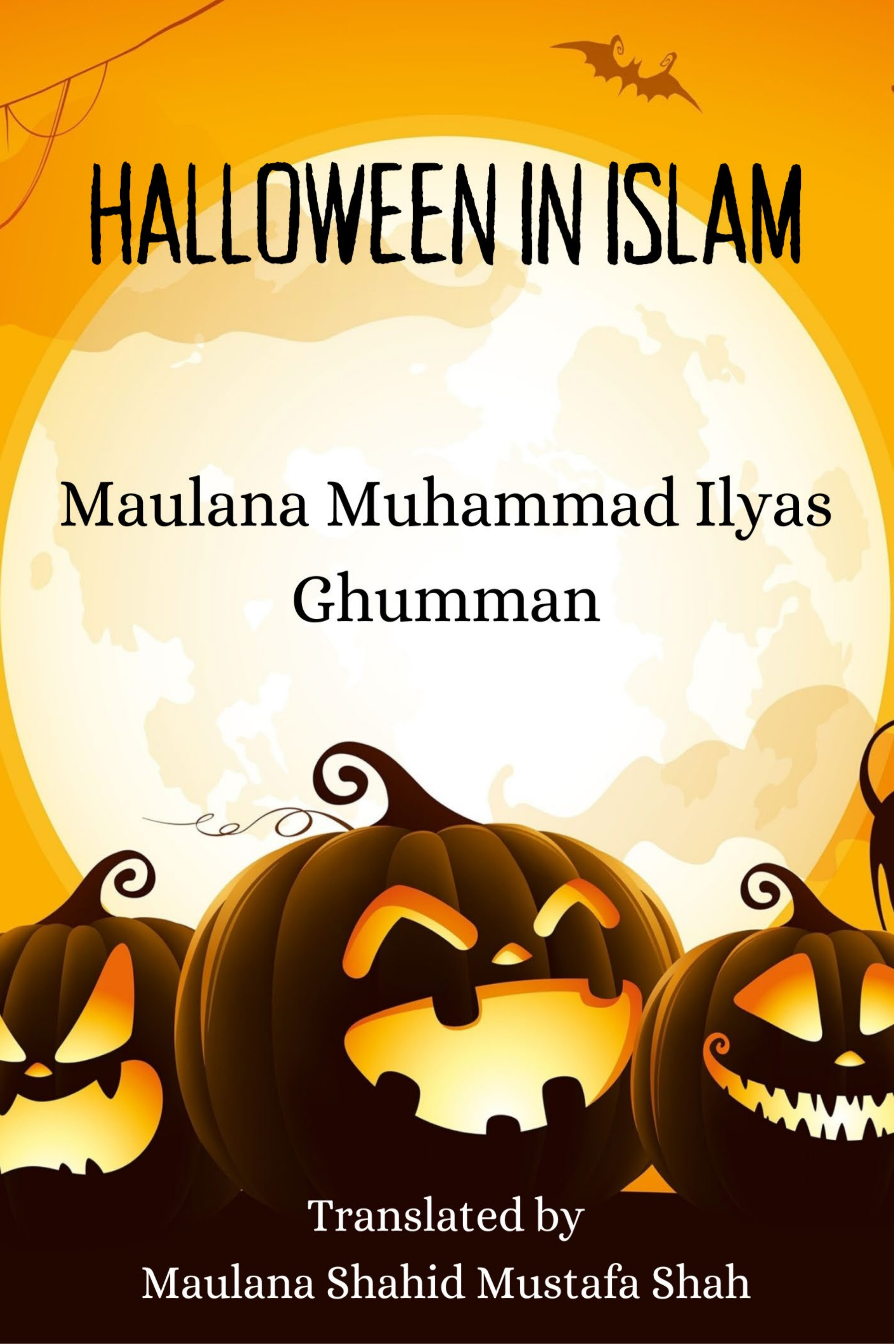

HALLOWEEN IN ISLAM

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History of Halloween and its activities

Halloween had its origins in the festival of Samhain among the Celts of ancient Britain and Ireland. On the day corresponding to November 1 on contemporary calendars, the new year was believed to begin. That date was considered the beginning of the winter period, the date on which the herds were returned from pasture and land tenures were renewed. During the Samhain festival the souls of those who had died were believed to return to visit their homes, and those who had died during the year were believed to journey to the otherworld. People set bonfires on hilltops for relighting their hearth fires for the winter and to frighten away evil spirits, and they sometimes wore masks and other disguises to avoid being recognized by the ghosts thought to be present. It was in those ways that beings such as witches, hobgoblins, fairies, and demons came to be associated with the day. The period was also thought to be favorable for divination on matters such as marriage, health, and death. When the Romans conquered the Celts in the 1st century CE, they added their own festivals of Feralia, commemorating the passing of the dead, and of Pomona, the goddess of the harvest.

In the 7th century CE Pope Boniface IV established All Saints' Day, originally on May 13, and in the following century, perhaps in an effort to supplant the pagan holiday with a Christian observance, it was moved to November 1. The evening before All Saints' Day became a holy, or hallowed, eve and thus Halloween. By the end of the Middle Ages, the secular and the sacred days had merged. The Reformation essentially put an end to the religious holiday among Protestants, although in Britain especially Halloween continued to be celebrated as a secular holiday. Along with other festivities, the celebration of

Halloween was largely forbidden among the early American colonists, although in the 1800s there developed festivals that marked the harvest and incorporated elements of Halloween. When large numbers of immigrants, including the Irish, went to the United States beginning in the mid 19th century, they took their Halloween customs with them, and in the 20th century Halloween became one of the principal U.S. holidays, particularly among children.

As a secular holiday, Halloween has come to be associated with a number of activities. One is the practice of pulling usually harmless pranks. Celebrants wear masks and costumes for parties and for trick-or-treating, thought to have derived from the British practice of allowing the poor to beg for food, called “soul cakes.” Trick-or-treaters go from house to house with the threat that they will pull a trick if they do not receive a treat, usually candy. Halloween parties often include games such as bobbing for apples, perhaps derived from the Roman celebration of Pomona. Along with skeletons and black cats, the holiday has incorporated scary beings such as ghosts, witches, and vampires into the celebration. Another symbol is the jack-o’-lantern, a hollowed-out pumpkin, originally a turnip, carved into a demonic face and lit with a candle inside. Since the mid-20th century the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has attempted to make the collection of money for its programs a part of Halloween.

See also the Britannica Classic article on Halloween, which appeared in the 13th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica.[1]

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[1] https://www.britannica.com/topic/Halloween

Halloween’s Spending

Even though Halloween is just a single day, as a holiday it is nonetheless responsible for a great deal of consumer spending on everything from costumes and makeup to candy and party supplies to (of course) pumpkins.

Based on the Keynesian school of economic thought, major spending holidays can have significant and positive short-term benefits for the economy by encouraging extra purchases that might not otherwise occur. Indeed, according to the National Retail Federation (NRF), in 2021, Americans spent a record $10.1 billion on Halloween, the second biggest retail event of the year.[2]

Religious views on Halloween

Halloween according to Jehovah’s Witness

The Bible does not mention Halloween, a holiday that many observe on October 31 each year. However, the ancient origins and traditions of Halloween conflict with Bible teachings.

Although some people view Halloween as harmless fun, the practices associated with it are in direct conflict with Bible teachings. Halloween is based on false beliefs about the dead and invisible spirits, or demons.

Notice the following verses that show how God views the beliefs associated with Halloween:

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[2] https://nrf.com/media-center/press-releases/halloween-participation-returns-pre-pandemic-levels-record-spending

“There must never be anyone among you who . . . consults ghosts or spirits, or calls up the dead.”—Deuteronomy 18:10-12, The Jerusalem Bible.

Meaning: God does not approve of efforts to contact the dead or even of giving the appearance of trying to have contact with those who have died.

“The dead know nothing at all.”—Ecclesiastes 9:5.

Meaning: Because the dead are unconscious, they cannot contact the living.

“[Do not] be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too.”—1 Corinthians 10:20, 21, New International Version.

Meaning: Those who want God’s favor must avoid any connection with demons.

“Stand firm against the crafty acts of the Devil; because we have a struggle . . . against the wicked spirit forces.”—Ephesians 6:11, 12.

Meaning: Christians should oppose wicked spirit forces, not pretend to celebrate with them. [3]

Halloween in Judaism

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[3] https://www.jw.org/en/bible-teachings/questions/halloween-origin/

The reasons for the Jewish prohibition vary. Mainly, Jews are forbidden by the Torah to partake in "gentile customs," a prohibition derived from:

After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do; and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do; neither shall ye walk in their statutes. [Leviticus 18:3]

This edict has been used by Jewish religious leaders as a source to determine the dress code and permissible behavior of the Jewish community throughout history.

Jews are also not allowed to partake in non-Jewish or idoltorous worship, per the Ten Commandments. Halloween, having both pagan and Catholic backgrounds, is deemed a gentile festival and is therefore forbidden to Jews.[4]

Islamic View on Halloween

May Allah grant us the ability to follow Islamic orders and protect us from the words and actions of ancient and modern ignorance.

﴿إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الإِسْلامُ﴾

[3:19]
Translation:
Certainly, Allah’s only Way is Islam.

عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رضي الله عنهما قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ.

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[4] https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/do-jews-celebrate-halloween

[سنن أبي داود، كتاب اللباس، باب في لبس الشهرة، ج٤، ص٤٤، المكتبة العصرية]
Translation:
On the authority of Ibn Umar, may God be pleased with them both, the Messenger of God, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, said: He who imitates a people is one of them.
[Sunan Abi Dawud 4031]

Abdullah ibn Amr رضي الله عنهما narrated:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَمْرِو قَالَ مَنْ بَنَى فِي بِلَادِ الْأَعَاجِمِ فَصَنَعَ نَوْرُوزَهُمْ وَمِهْرَجَانَهُمْ وَتَشَبَّهَ بِهِمْ حَتَّى يَمُوتَ وَهُوَ كَذَلِكَ حُشِرَ مَعَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.
السنن الكبرى للبيهقي (9/ 392)
Translation:
"Whoever resides in the lands of the non-Arabs and then celebrates their religious occasions (such as Nairuz and Mihrajan – Persian holidays) and emulates their practices and thereafter dies in such a condition, shall be raised with them on the Day of Judgment."

Things we need to do

It is essential for us to safeguard ourselves and our family and friends from following the wrong path which will lead us to Jahannam.

﴿يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا وَّقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ﴾
[Surah Tahrim verse 6]
Translation:
O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones.
Here are some things we need to focus on:

1. Seek refuge

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُعَوِّذُ الْحَسَنَ وَالْحُسَيْنَ وَيَقُولُ " إِنَّ أَبَاكُمَا كَانَ يُعَوِّذُ بِهَا إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ، أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّةِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ وَهَامَّةٍ، وَمِنْ كُلِّ عَيْنٍ لاَمَّةٍ ".

[Sahih Bukhari 3371]
Translation:
Ibn Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated that The Prophet ﷺ used to seek Refuge with Allah for Al-Hasan and Al-Husain and say: "Your forefather (i.e. Ibraheem) used to seek Refuge with Allah for Ismaeel and Ishaaq by reciting the following: 'O Allah! I seek Refuge with Your Perfect Words from every devil and from poisonous pests and from every evil, harmful, envious eye.' "

2. Educate one another

It is essential we educate ourselves on Islamic matters and affairs which are relevant to our daily lives. We need to inform the uninformed starting with those close to us and help them understand that as Muslims we must make our Deen as our life's first and only priority.

3. Imbed the importance of following the Sunnah

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ " كُلُّ أُمَّتِي يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ، إِلاَّ مَنْ أَبَى ". قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَأْبَى قَالَ " مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ، وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ أَبَى ."

[7280 [Sahih al-Bukhari

Translation:
Narrated Abu Huraira that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "All my followers will enter Paradise except those who refuse." They said, "O Allah's Messenger ﷺ! Who will refuse?" He said, "Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys me is the one who refuses (to enter it)."

Conclusion

Allah has stated in the glorious Quran:

﴿اِنَّ الۡمُبَذِّرِيۡنَ كَانُوۡۤا اِخۡوَانَ الشَّيٰطِيۡنِ‌ؕ وَكَانَ الشَّيۡطٰنُ لِرَبِّهٖ كَفُوۡرًا﴾
[Al-Isra 27]
Translation:
Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful.

Wasting our time, energy, and wealth on actions that become the cause of angering Allah Ta'ala should be avoided at all costs. A Muslim should engage his time in pleasing Allah Ta’ala and striving to follow the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and stay as far as possible from those who Imitate and dress up as those who spread mischief in our society.

Allah Says in His Holy Book:

﴿اِنَّ الشَّيۡطٰنَ لَـكُمۡ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوۡهُ عَدُوًّا‌ؕ اِنَّمَا يَدۡعُوۡا حِزۡبَهٗ لِيَكُوۡنُوۡا مِنۡ اَصۡحٰبِ السَّعِيۡرِؕ﴾
[Surah Fatir verse 6]
Translation:
Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy. He only invites his party to be among the companions of the Blaze.

Legal Ruling On Halloween

Based on the Islamic teachings and principles it is Haraam (impermissible) for a Muslim to part take or affiliate oneself in any activity of Halloween.

﴿وَمَنْ يُّشَاقِقِ الرَّسُوْلَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَـهُ الْهُدٰى وَ يَـتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيْلِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ نُوَلِّهٖ مَا تَوَلّٰى وَنُصْلِهٖ جَهَـنَّمَؕ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيْرًا﴾

[Surah Nisa verse 115]
Translation:
Whoever opposes and disobeys what the Messenger has brought after the truth has become clear to them, and follows a path other than that of the believers, I will leave them with what they have chosen; and I will not bring them to the truth, since they have deliberately turned away. I will then enter them into the fire of Hell to suffer in its heat. What an evil place to return to!

May Allah Protect us from following the ways of those who deviate from the teachings of اهل السنة والجماعة.